Barnstable, Mass., Mayll, 1967

Dear Dick:

Late Tuesday night Virgil telephoned and talked for half an hour to tellus that the reason that you had cabled on May 4 that you were returning on the following Saturday prepared to resign was due to the cable that was sent to you on Tuesday night with Jesse's named faked. All I had known was that on the afternoon of the 4th., when I had gone to Fuller's office by appointment, Fuller said almost at once that there was little need that he hear me tell of my talk with you in Genoa because the situation was changed by the receipt of your cable. Naturally I was astounded and said as much. I could hardly believe it to be true, and wondered what had made you change your mind. Now I know.

To bring you up to date on my activities: Our boat docked in N. Y. Tuesday, April 25, and I was immediately plunged into reading galley proof of my book and writing additional copy on the Kennedy- Harper- Look controversy, until I could come up here over the weekend to catch up on household matters. On Monday I went to Philadelphia for the first of four weekly seminars at Crozer Seminary; thus it was not till the following day, Tuesday, May 2, that I could do what had often been in my mind — to report to Lyons and others of my talk with you. Lyons set up a dinner meeting with Harvey Williamson and Earl Brandenburg and me at the Church for the next night. Harvey couldn't make it, but I did see him briefly at the reception following the musical affair in the nave. There I also had a chance to talk with Laubach. Shortly after I had begun speaking to him, Fitch came up and I was able to say, in shortened form, what I had said to E. B. earlier. I made three points, namely that 1) you were in excellent physical and mental health and said that you had profited from the help given you by the two physicians; 2) you had seen, in the perspective of time and distance, where you had made mistakes with the choir and were returning determined to practice a disciplined and humble way before God and man (and ministers) ; and 3) that the months of trial and trouble had deepened your spiritual life with the meaning of prayer and the presence of God very real to you now. Neither Laubach or Fitch had much to say. There was some warmth, though of small candle-power, from Gene, but Carrol was a cake of ice. Then I turned to Williamson, who had come up; however I could speak to him but briefly because Jim McCracken was wanting to talk with him. We walked together to Jim to whom I had the opportunity to say only that I had found you in excellent shape, eager to return to Riverside to make good at your job.

It would seem reasonable to assume that the faked cable was sent to you because Lyons spoke to several people that Tuesday morning saying that he had just talked to me by phone,giving the gist of my reactions to having seen you in Genoa. To forestall any sentiment for you that I might enkindle among members of the two Boards, someone sent the cable with the hoped- for result. As I say, this is a reasonable assumption, although it might have been sent notwithstanding. Who sent it will surely become known; until then, I think it is not for you or me or anyone else to overwork the adrenal glands casting accusations or assumptions about. Here I am particularly concerned about Virgil; while I am pleased that he is expressing affection and concern for you, I do think that he must not talk. I am to telephone him tomorrow night and will urge all caution. It would harm the Church, you and all concerned if this got into the newspapers.

Dick, my heart goes out to you for I know how great your suffering must be. We do believe that God uses even the follies of men to work for good. What is He saying in al this to you? It may well be that you should not return to this badly mixed-up situation. Maybe you should say what St. Francis Xavier said when he was asked what his reaction would be if the Pope should disolve his order. He replied, "After an hour at prayer, it would, I think, be all right." At any rate, hold all things lightly, harbour no ill will. Above all, don't return to N.Y. soon. Let some else speak for you; write but few letters; lean on Dr. Sargent who is your friend.

Ever yours, Jesse